



G-Health Leverages Holon Solutions Technology to Streamline COVID-19 Vaccinations

Discover how a community efficiently vaccinated its most vulnerable members and provided a positive healthcare interaction

Challenge

As an organization dedicated to improving the health and well-being of underserved populations in the Greater Buffalo, New York, area, the team at G-Health Enterprises stepped up to protect the community by participating in the state's strategic plan to vaccinate New Yorkers for COVID-19.

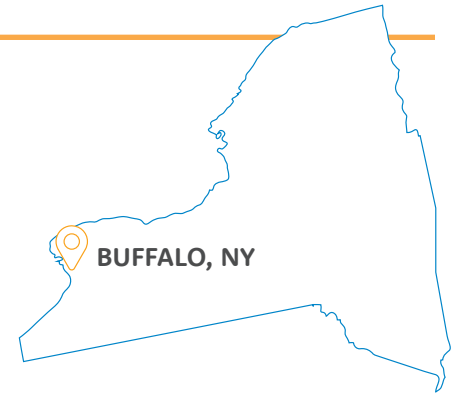
However, identifying eligible individuals, inviting them to a convenient vaccine clinic location, earning their trust, and documenting their vaccination health services were immediate concerns that G-Health had to address quickly.

The rapidly evolving New York State regulations regarding the vaccine process required the G-Health team to create an efficient logistical workflow in a very short period of time. Further complicating matters were the challenges associated with reaching Buffalo's vulnerable populations, many of whom do not have primary care physicians and may not be in a position to access communications about eligibility or how they might receive a vaccine.

Experience with an initial COVID-19 vaccine clinic demonstrated that when community members did get word and showed up, onsite registration and documentation processes extended wait times for clinic attendees.

Licensed Medical Assistants (MAs) were tasked with gathering patient information while individuals stood in long lines, often outside in cold winter weather. Instead of focusing on delivering a health service to protect their community, the MAs spent a significant amount of time on cumbersome paperwork, resulting in a frustrating, inefficient experience for all involved.

The initial clinic took a full day, and documentation tasks continued on long after the clinic was over. Long waits and slow processes affected G-Health's ability to maximize valuable health services and minimize barriers for community members.



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Solution

To address these challenges, G-Health leaders started with two key actions:



G-Health's Urban Family Practice partnered with the Belle Center, a local community-based organization (CBO), to serve as the host site for the vaccine clinic and to support identification and outreach to individuals in the community eligible for the vaccine. The Belle Center was one of 35 community-based pop-up sites in New York committed to vaccinating 25,000 people in just one week in early February 2021.



G-Health then turned to Holon Solutions to streamline the patient information-gathering process. With Holon's Referral application, Urban Family Practice and the Belle Center could connect in a secure digital environment and close the loop on outreach, delivery, and documentation of vaccine services.

Next, the G-Health vaccination plan rolled out with the following steps.

IDENTIFICATION AND OUTREACH

Belle Center employees identified which of its center members were eligible to receive a vaccine based on age or other qualifying criteria and provided information on how those members could participate in the vaccine clinic. In some cases, the Belle Center employees themselves were eligible for vaccination.

Employees also answered incoming phone calls and questions from residents who were seeking a COVID-19 vaccine, helping them understand how and when they might participate. Because the employees live in the local community and have built a relationship of trust, the center members and residents were comfortable acting on the vaccine information they received.

Members and nearby residents were also familiar with the Belle Center and had access to it, which reduced barriers to this important preventive health intervention. No one had to struggle with finding an out-of-the-way site location or become acquainted with new resources.

The convenience of the Belle Center's location and the element of trust were central to the vaccination plan's success. Without that trust, residents might have shied away from engagement, and without access to a local resource, they might have opted out of the COVID-19 vaccination by default because of transportation or communication barriers.

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REGISTRATION

To streamline delivery of the vaccines, Urban Family Practice used Holon's unique referral questionnaire capabilities to create a form for capturing the necessary demographic and insurance information for each patient.

The Belle Center used Holon's Referral application to create a vaccine referral for 89 eligible community members using the form in advance of the event. Upon receiving the referrals, the practice created charts for the individuals in their electronic medical record (EMR) system, entered the orders for the vaccine, the consent, and scheduled the individual for a vaccine appointment.

VACCINATION CLINIC

By collecting community members' information and creating orders in the EMR in advance, the G-Health-Belle Center partnership was able to reduce the time clinical staff spent on administrative activities the day of the vaccination clinic. That meant more people could receive a vaccine in less time, with a lot less waiting. It also meant Urban Family Practice MAs could dedicate their time to patients, offering reassurance and compassionate care.

FOLLOW UP

After the event, the Holon Referral application allowed Urban Family Practice to take the next step: identify which community members had registered for a COVID-19 vaccine but didn't arrive at the Belle Center to receive the vaccine during the pop-up event. This information provided the clinical team with some insight into the health needs of those community members. Now their vaccine status could be verified easily, and teams could follow up and re-engage them to get vaccinated.

Additionally, the patients who received their first dose could now be notified to receive their recommended second dose for protection from the deadly coronavirus.

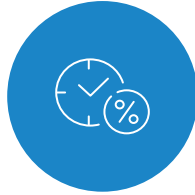
The Holon Referral application allowed Urban Family Practice to identify which community members had registered but didn't arrive at the pop-up event.

Results



PATIENTS

- » Less time waiting in line
- » Familiar setting
- » Better access to care
- » Follow-up call for second dose



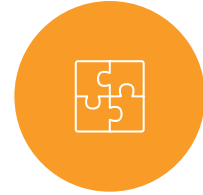
STAFF

- » Less time spent on documentation
- » More time for patient care
- » Fewer logistical hassles



G-HEALTH

- » More accurate patient information
- » Automated, seamless data collection
- » Better use of clinical resources
- » Extremely low no-show rate (4%)



COMMUNITY

- » Protection from COVID-19
- » Trust for G-Health
- » Support of state vaccination efforts

“The difference between our first COVID-19 vaccination clinic and the one we did using Holon was like night and day,” said Alexa Jadoch, Practice Facilitator, G-Health Enterprises. “Holon’s Referrals application enabled us to gather and prep information on all the community members the Belle Center identified well in advance. That saved everyone so much time. The experience was a dramatic improvement, and with the information now in our EMR, we have a mechanism for tracking and following up with people, so they don’t fall through the cracks.”

More than 94 percent of the people entered into the Holon Referral application as vaccine referrals arrived on the day of the event and received their first dose. Additional members of the local community who qualified for the vaccine were also invited to participate as walk-ins.

In all, more than 360 people received a vaccine at the event in just three hours — much less time than in G-Health’s previous all-day experience without the benefit of the Holon Referral application.

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A Model for Success

With its partnership model and innovative use of Holon technology, G-Health successfully removed barriers to care and provided a convenient experience for the local community and its most vulnerable citizens. Best of all, the clinicians were able to deliver a vital health service instead of spending a full day and then some on administrative tasks.

“It’s amazing how the community worked together to remove barriers that allowed us to deliver the right care to the right people in the right place at the right time,” said Nicole Percy, Director of Value-Based Payments, G-Health Enterprises. “The collaboration among G-Health, Holon, and the Belle Center made it possible. This type of partnership is transformative for a community and provides an example of how the healthcare industry at large can successfully address social determinants of health.”

Thanks to its compelling results, Urban Family Practice plans to engage additional CBOs using the Holon platform to streamline all future COVID-19 vaccination clinics. And, G-Health’s accountable care organization, Greater Buffalo United Accountable Care Organization, is deploying Holon Referrals to additional locations to reach even more members of the community.

ABOUT HOLON

At Holon Solutions, we’re dedicated to making healthcare better for everyone. Our patented technology delivers precision information to providers in their workflows, so they can deliver optimal patient care.

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ABOUT G-HEALTH ENTERPRISES

G-Health Enterprises is a healthcare organization dedicated to improving health equity in western New York by removing barriers created by social determinants of health.

FOUNDED 1996

LOCATION Buffalo, New York

EMPLOYEES 191

AFFILIATES

- Urban Family Practice
- The Greater Buffalo United Accountable Healthcare Network
- The Greater Buffalo United Accountable Care Organization
- The Greater Buffalo United Independent Physician’s Association
- The Greater Buffalo United Community Based Organization
- The Raul & Toni Vazquez Foundation
- The Greater Buffalo United Association Incorporated